Numb. 42.

The EXAMINER.

From Thursday *May* 10, to Thursday *May* 17, 1711.

——————Quem cur distringere coner,
Tutus ab infestis latronibus?

I Never let slip an Opportunity of endeavouring to convince the World, that I am not Partial, and to confound the idle Reproach of my being hired or directed what to write in Defence of the present Ministry, or for detecting the Practices of the former. When I first undertook this Paper, I firmly resolv'd, that if ever I observ'd any gross Neglect, Abuse or Corruption in the publick Management, which might give any just Offence to reasonable People, I would take notice of it with that innocent Boldness which becomes an honest Man, and a true Lover of his Country; at the same time preserving the Respect due to Persons so highly entrusted by so wise and excellent a Queen. I know not how such a Liberty might have been resented; but I thank God there has been no Occasion given me to exercise it; for I can safely affirm, that I have with the utmost Rigour, examin'd all the Actions of the present Ministry, as far as they fall under general Cognizance, without being able to accuse them of one ill or mistaken Step. Observing indeed some time ago, that Seeds of Dissention had been plentifully scatter'd from a *certain Corner*, and fearing they began to rise and spread, I immediately writ a Paper on the Subject; which I treated with that Warmth I thought it required: But the Prudence of those at the Helm soon prevented this growing Evil; and at present it seems likely to have no Consequences.

I have had indeed for some time a small Occasion of Quarrelling, which I thought too inconsiderable for a formal Subject of Complaint, though I have hinted at it more than once. But it is grown at present to as great a Height, as a Matter of that Nature can possibly bear; and therefore I conceive it high time that an effectual stop should be put to it. I have been amaz'd at the flaming Licentiousness of several Weekly Papers, which for some Months past, have been chiefly employ'd in barefac'd Scurrilities against those who are in the greatest Trust and Favour with the Qu——, with the first and last Letters of their Names frequently Printed; or some Periphrasis describing their Station, or other Innuendo's, contriv'd too plain to be mistaken. The Consequence of which is, (and it is natural it should be so) that their long Impunity hath render'd them still more Audacious.

At this time I particularly intend a Paper call'd the *Medley*; whose indefatigable, incessant Railings against me, I never thought convenient to take notice of, because it would have diverted my Design, which I thought was of Publick Use. Besides, I never yet observ'd that Writer, or those Writers, (for it is every way a *Medley*) to argue against any one material Point or Fact that I had advanced, or make one fair Quotation. And after all, I knew very well how soon the World grows weary of Controversy. 'Tis plain to me, that three or four Hands at least have been join'd at times in that worthy Composition; but the Out-lines as well as the Finishing, seem to have been always the Work of the same Pen, as it is visible from half a score Beauties of Style inseparable from it. But who these *Medlers* are, or where the judicious Leaders have pick'd them up, I shall never go about to Conjecture. Factious Rancour, false Wit, abandon'd Scurrility, impudent Falshood, and servile Pedantry, having so many Fathers, and so few to own them, that Curiosity her self would not be at the pains to guess. It is the first time I ever did my self the Honour to mention that admirable Paper: Nor could I imagine any Occasion likely to happen, that would make it necessary for me to engage with such an Adversary. This Paper is Weekly Publish'd, and as appears by the Numbers, has been so for several Months, and is next to the *Observator*, allow'd to be the best Production of the Party. Last Week my Printer brought me that of *May* 7, Numb. 32. where there are two Paragraphs relating to the *Speaker* of the House of Commons, and to Mr. *Harley*; which, as little as I am inclin'd to engage with such an Antagonist, I cannot let pass, without failing in my Duty to the Publick: And if those in Power will suffer such infamous Insinuations to pass with Impunity, they act without Precedent from any Age or Country of the World.

I desire to open this Matter, and leave the *Whigs* themselves to determine upon it. The House of Commons resolv'd, *Nemine Contradicente*, that the *Speaker* should congratulate Mr. *Harley*'s Escape and Recovery in the Name of the House, upon his first Attendance on their Service. This is accordingly done; and the Speech, together with the Chancellor of the *Exchequer*'s, are Printed by Order of the House. The Author of the *Medley* takes this Speech to task the very next Week after it is Publish'd, telling us, in the aforesaid Paper, That *the* Speaker's *commending Mr.* Harley, *for being an* Instrument of great Good to the Nation, *was ill-chosen Flattery; because Mr.* Harley *had brought the Nation under great Difficulties, to say no more:* He says, *that when the* Speaker *tells Mr.* Harley, that Providence has wonderfully preserv'd him from some unparallel'd Attempts (for that the *Medley* alludes to) *he only revives a false and groundless Calumny upon other Men; which is an Instance of impotent, but inveterate Malice, that makes him* [the *Speaker*] *still appear more vile and contemptible.* This is an Extract from his first Paragraph. In the next this Writer says, *That the Speaker's praying to God for the continuance of Mr.* Harley's *Life, as an invaluable Blessing, was a fulsom piece of Insincerity, which exposes him to Shame and Derision; because he is known to bear ill Will to Mr.* Harley, *to have an extream bad Opinion of Him, and to think him an Obstructor of those fine Measures he would bring about.*

I now appeal to the *Whigs* themselves, whether a great Minister of State, in high Favour with the Qu—, and a *Speaker* of the House of Commons, were ever Publickly treated after so extraordinary a Manner, in the most licentious Times? For this is not a clandestine Libel stolen into the World, but openly Printed and Sold, with the Bookseller's Name and place of Abode at the Bottom. And the Juncture is admirable, when Mr. *H——y* is generally believ'd upon the very Point to be made an *Earl*, and promoted to the most important Station of the Kingdom: Nay, the very Marks of Esteem he hath so lately received from the whole Representative Body of the People, are call'd *ill-chosen Flattery, and a fulsom Piece of Insincerity, exposing the* Donors *to Shame and Derision.*

Does this intrepid Writer think he has sufficiently disguis'd the Matter, by that stale Artifice of altering the Story, and putting it as a suppos'd Case? Did any Man who ever saw the Congratulatory Speech, read either of those Paragraphs in the *Medley*, without Interpreting them just as I have done? Will the Author declare upon his great Sincerity, that he never had any such Meaning? Is it enough, that a Jury at *Westminster-Hall* would, perhaps, not find him guilty of defaming the *Speaker* and Mr. *Harley* in that Paper? Which however, I am much in doubt of too; and must think the Law very defective, if the Reputation of such Persons must lie at the Mercy of such Pens. I do not remember to have seen any Libel, suppos'd to be writ with Caution and double Meaning, in order to prevent Prosecution, deliver'd under so thin a Cover, or so unartificially made up as this; whether it were from an Apprehension of his Reader's Dulness, or an Effect of his own. He hath transcrib'd the very Phrases of the *Speaker*, and put them in a different Character, for fear they might pass unobserv'd, and to prevent all possibility of being

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mistaken. I shall be pleas'd to see him have recourse to the old Evasion, and say, that I who make the Application, am chargeable with the Abuse: Let any Reader of either Party be Judge. But I cannot forbear asserting, as my Opinion, that for a M———ry to endure such open Calumny, without calling the Author to Account, is next to deserving it. And this is an Omission I venture to charge upon the present M———ry, who are too apt to despise little Things, which however have not always little Consequences.

When this Paper was first undertaken, one Design, among others, was, to *Examine* some of those Writings so frequently Publish'd with an evil Tendency, either to Religion or Government; but I was long diverted by other Enquiries, which I thought more immediately necessary; to animadvert upon Mens Actions, rather than their Speculations: to shew the Necessity there was of changing the Ministry, that our Constitution in Church and State might be preserv'd; to expose some dangerous Principles and Practices under the former Administration, and prove by many Instances, that those who are now at the Helm, are entirely in the true Interest of Prince and People. This I may modestly hope, hath in some Measure been already done, sufficient to answer the End propos'd, which was to inform the Ignorant and those at distance, and to convince such as are not engag'd in a Party, from other Motives than that of Conscience. I know not whether I shall have any Appetite to continue this Work much longer; if I do, perhaps some Time may be spent in exposing and overturning the false Reasonings of those who engage their Pens on the other side, without losing time in vindicating my self against their Scurrilities, much less in retorting them. Of this sort there is a certain humble Companion, A *French Maitre des Langues*, who every Month Publishes an Extract from Votes, News-Papers, Speeches and Proclamations, larded with some insipid Remarks of his own; which he calls *The Political State of* Great Britain: This ingenious Piece he tells us himself, is constantly translated into *French*, and Printed in *Holland*, where the *Dutch*, no doubt, conceive most noble Sentiments of us, convey'd through such a Vehicle. 'Tis observable in his Account for *April*, that the Vanity, so predominant in many of his Nation, has made him more concern'd for the Honour of *Guiscard*, than the Safety of Mr. *H——y*: And for fear we should think the worse of his Country upon that *Assassin*'s Account, he tells us, there have been more Murders, Paracides and Villanies, committed in *England*, than any other part of the World. I cannot imagine how an illiterate Foreigner, who is neither Master of our Language, or indeed of common Sense, and who is devoted to a Faction, I suppose, for no other Reason, but his having more *Whig*-Customers than *Tories*, should take it into his Head to write Politick Tracts of our Affairs. But I presume, he builds upon the Foundation of having been call'd to an Account for his Insolence in one of his former Monthly Productions, which is a Method that seldom fails of giving some Vogue to the foolishest Composition. If such a Work must be done, I wish some tolerable Hand would undertake it; and that we would not suffer a little whiffling *Frenchman* to neglect his Trade of teaching his Language to our Children, and presume to instruct Foreigners in our Politicks.

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